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I See Molasses

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Mark DeBry
Logan, Utah
November 29, 2017

“I See Moleasses” Joke

Informant: Mark is my younger brother; he is the youngest of us five siblings. He just turned 20 and is preparing to start college at Snow College in Ephraim, Utah. He has been living in Georgia the last month to make money working at a landscaping company in preparation for school. Mark is very talented in most everything he sets his mind to. He enjoys drawing, playing baseball, singing, and joking around. He has always been the sibling that gets us laughing, keeping the attitude light and happy. Mark just recently finished serving a full-time mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in Ukraine and he is in the process of being acclimated to life at home again. He is the type of person that can talk to anyone about anything, is very relatable, and enjoys having a good time. He is considering going into the business/finance field or into advertising for his occupation, but is still deciding.

Context: I interviewed Mark over the phone and recorded the interview using my computer. He is living in Georgia currently so phone calling was the easiest way to contact him. He had just been spending time with new friends in Georgia when I called so he was happy and in a good mood. This joke goes back to when Mark was little, he remembers it most when he was around the age of 10 but probably only because it wasn't until then that he finally understood it. It comes from our dad, possibly a joke he heard from his family or friends growing up. The joke would always come up when kneeling down for family prayer in the living room. It was common practice to kneel, usually with elbows up on the couch and hind ends facing outward. Dad would make it a point every time to lean back, sometimes interrupting the prayer, and saying in a loud and boisterous voice, “I see moleASSESS!” He would then laugh out loud or chuckle to himself as he leaned back in for the prayer. Everyone would end up either giggling or shaking their heads to finish the prayer. If there a friend or someone close to the family visiting, we always had to follow the prayer with telling the full joke. Dad passed away 8 years ago and this joke and term has become to mean more than just a joke and a funny thing to say. The brothers have since taken the place of our dad in leaning back behind everyone during family prayer and yelling out, “I see moleasses.” Mark believes this is a joke that is definitely not appropriately said in a public or religious setting. If there was company over that wasn't familiar with the family humor, it would rarely happen. Mark remembers it most when it was only family or close friends present.

Text: It was the first morning of spring and there were a bunch of moles that were getting ready for the spring, and they were lined up in the hole to come up to the ground. The first one sticks his head out of the hole and the bottom two yell to the top one, “What can you see?” And the first mole yells back down, “I see green hills and flowers, and a blue sky.” The second one sticks

his nose up and the bottom one asks, “What do you smell?” And he says, “I smell clean air and fresh flowers, [pause] it’s wonderful!” Then the top two call down to the third one still stuck in the hole and say, “What do you see?” He yells up, I see moleASSES.”

Texture: When I asked him about the joke he immediately said “Oh! MoleASSES”, emphasizing the “asses” part. While interviewing him, he said the joke in a more monotone voice, probably because he knew that I already knew the joke and punchline. But when he is with a group of friends who haven’t heard it before but have most likely heard one of my brothers say, “I see moleasses”, he gets more animated as he tells it. When he quotes the moles, his voice often gets higher pitched and screechy. After the second mole he sniffs in the air, as if to mimic the second mole. The quotes of the first two moles are often light and airy with a higher tone like they had experienced something amazing. The final punch line is often louder and more drawn out, making sure to really emphasize the “asses” part.

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